CLAIMS

1. A method for producing hydrolyzed protein by subjecting a vegetable protein material containing saccharides to enzymatic hydrolysis using a fungal culture in a liquid reaction system, comprising mixing the vegetable protein material with the fungal culture, conducting a reaction first at a temperature ranging from 15 °C to 39 °C with aeration and agitation, and then, ~~after stopping the aeration~~, conducting and completing the reaction at a temperature ranging from 40 °C to 60 °C.

2. The method for producing hydrolyzed protein according to Claim 1, wherein the vegetable protein material is selected from the group consisting of wheat gluten, corn gluten, de-fatted soybean and treated products thereof.

3. The method for producing hydrolyzed protein according to Claim 1, wherein the reaction which is conducted at a temperature ranging from 15 °C to 39 °C is shifted to the reaction which is conducted at a temperature ranging from 40 °C to 60 °C when from 10 % to 60 % of the total period of time required from the start-up to the completion of the reaction passes after the start-up of the reaction.

4. The method for producing hydrolyzed protein according to Claim 1, wherein a ratio of reducing sugars present in the reaction product obtained at the completion of the

reaction is adjusted to 5 % by weight or less based on the total solid content in the reaction product.

5. The method for producing hydrolyzed protein according to Claim 1, wherein the preparation of the fungal culture and the hydrolysis reaction of the vegetable protein material are conducted in a submerged culture tank-type reaction vessel.

according to claim 1

6. The method for producing hydrolyzed protein wherein the vegetable protein material is at least partially in a solid state, and is pulverized to 300 μm or less prior to the enzymatic hydrolysis, dispersed in hot water at higher than 80 °C, and subjected to the sterilization immediately after air bubbles contained in the pulverized product are substantially removed.

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